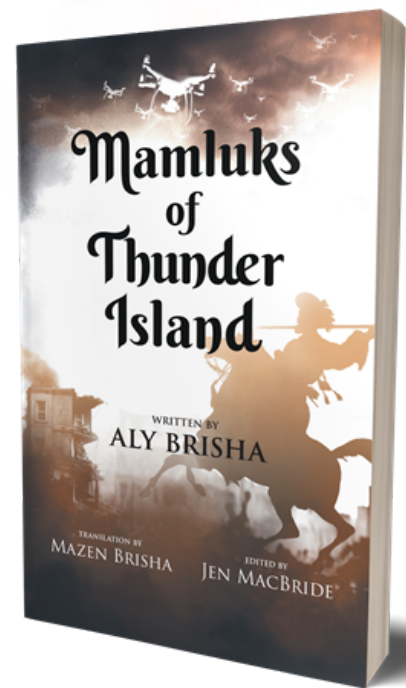


Mamluks of Thunder Island



ABOUT THE BOOK: The novel unfolds as a dystopia set in an imagined world, situated in the future after the inevitable occurs. Human societies grapple with devastation brought about by nuclear wars and climate change. The majority of survivors find themselves living in "human sanctuaries," overseen by a select few elites who have gleaned wisdom from the bitterness of experience. The author is a writer, journalist, and documentary maker. He previously authored two novels and several specialized books encompassing media, politics, and history. Residing in the Middle East, he is intricately engaged with myriad social, political, and intellectual issues, given the nature of his profession. He interacts with the multitude of challenges prevalent in the countries of the Middle East. He undertook the coverage of the Arab Spring events and closely followed on the ground the rise of extremists in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Tunisia, and other Middle-Eastern countries. He holds the perspective that military and religious dictatorships are the foremost afflictions faced by these societies plagued by oppression, violence, poverty, and extremism.

ABOUT THE BOOK: Aly Brisha graduated from the Journalism department at Cairo University in 1991. He worked as a journalist and program producer in the most prominent media institutions in the Middle East, including the Al-Ahram Egyptian newspaper, Al Arabiya news channel, and Sky News Arabia. In 2011, he published his first novel, City of the Sun, which was translated into English in 2013. Also in 2013, he released his novel Ibn Al Bitar's Voyages. The English version received the Independent Publisher Book Awards in 2020. In 2023, his documentary One Face, Two Refugees was honoured with the Golden Telly Award.

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Inside the Book....

INTRODUCTION

I do not recommend reading this novel. You still have a chance. Go away. There is enough madness in the world, enough blood in the past, and enough fog in the future. There is no meaning in mixing madness, blood, and fog and chewing them between the pages of a novel. I am not sure how to phrase the following sentence: "The ship is sinking." Imagine that the ship is sinking. People are divided into three types.

The first type will run hysterically here and there in search of a chance to survive, trampling on others to find a foothold in a boat or a piece of wood that can float.

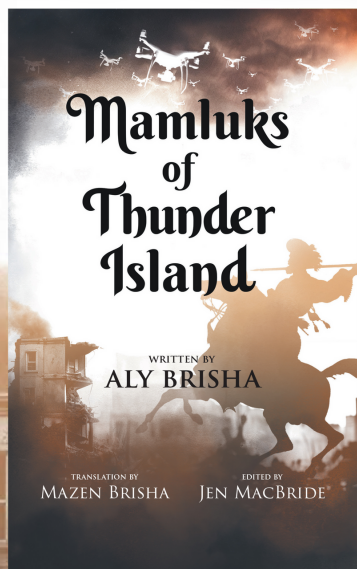
The second type will literally freeze because of their horror of the disaster and their lack of ingenuity. Panic paralyzes them, and they will drown in tears and wails before drowning in the darkness of the ocean.

The third type are brave and noble. They will extend a helping hand to those around them and raise their voice amidst the chaos: "Be careful, ladies and gentlemen. Women and children first." They will strive to leave a human touch in the final scene, but they will not appear in it, because they are usually the first to enter the darkness of the depths. This is how humans are always divided. Ah, maybe, or surely, there is a fourth type. No, not the musicians on the deck of the sinking ship. Oh, we're not talking about a movie directed by James Cameron. We're talking about the real world.

In the real world, there is a fourth type who will walk in the opposite direction. Perhaps he will go to the galley of the ship, light the stove, and prepare a meal. He will devote all his senses to the sizzle of olive oil with onions, garlic, vegetables, and spices. He will detach from reality as the piece of meat slowly sizzles on the hot grill, and he will watch the points of fat melt gradually, blending with the yellow juice before dripping together onto the hot surface, creating a crackling sound accompanied by a pleasant aroma.

If he were to pray to the gods of sinking ships, he would not ask for his own survival, but he would ask the gods to keep the stove level until he finishes his last meal, knowing that it is the only meal in his life that he will enjoy as it is and will remain forever as it is, without changing into shit.

For this fourth type, this novel was written.



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